



## **MABEL MAY WOODWARD ((1877-1945))**

### **Beach Scene**

Signed lower left, "Mabel M. Woodward"

watercolor on paper

14 1/2 x 19 1/2 in. (24 1/4 x 28 3/4 x 1 3/4 in.)

28841

### **PROVENANCE:**

Christie's New York, 6 December 1991, Lot 200

Private Collection, Santa Barbara, California

Woodward was born to an affluent family in Providence, Rhode Island, where she spent most of her life, except for a brief period in San Francisco and many summers in Ogunquit, Maine. Her family gave her the "finest domestic art education then available.

She began her studies at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1896. She graduated with highest honors. Later in 1898 she attended the Art Students League of New York, studying under Kenyon Cox and Frank Duveneck. She also studied for a time at the Ogunquit School of Art in Maine with Arthur Wesley Dow and Charles Woodbury.

She was faculty at the Rhode Island School of Design for over twenty years. There, she originated a class known as the "action class," in which students studied the human figure as a machine rather than as a stationary object. She painted during her summer vacations. She was greatly influenced by the impressionists, particularly William Merritt Chase and Frank DuMond. Woodward preferred colorful canvases and used bold, unlabored brushstrokes heavy with impasto.

Her earlier work includes a series of "old-fashioned girls in gardens." These were portraits of women and girls, set in outdoor gardens. Woodward's emphasis was less on the psychology of the human subject and more on the effects of light and color in the scene.

Later, she became known for her summer beach scenes along the New England shore. She painted many beach scenes and airy landscapes focusing on the play of light and shadow. These scenes often depicted families and children enjoying fine weather at the beach.

Woodward was one of Rhode Island's best-known artists in the 1920s and 1930s. But upon her death in 1945, she was almost totally unknown, as the art world favored French Impressionists over American Impressionists generally.

By the later part of the 20th century, interest in American Impressionists slowly returned. Woodward's work began to be rediscovered, and some of her larger portraits and beach studies have sold in the six-figure range.

(Courtesy the Boston Globe)

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Phoebe M. Woodward







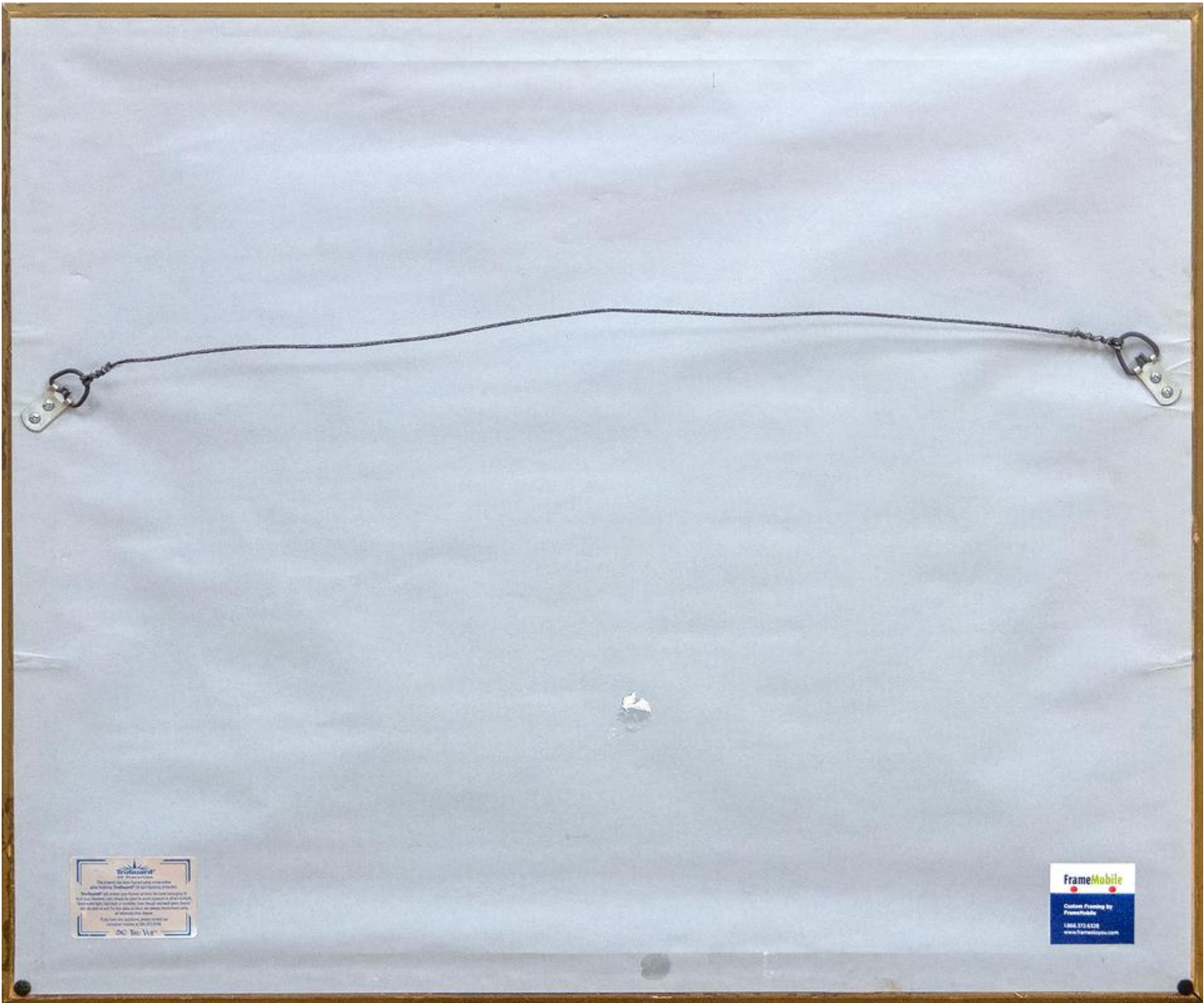












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